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ABSTRACT

This brief discusses how service learning can help teacher candidates meet National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education standards. It examines how the Division of Teacher Education at the University of Idaho is refocusing its teacher certification program to reflect national standards and place P-12 students at the center of preservice learning, ensuring that a community of learners will be developed both in academic settings and in society. Five goals guide the integration of service learning into this teacher preparation program: integrating service learning into all courses, examining the appropriate role of service learning as a pedagogy in teacher education, developing support for service learning from appropriate internal and external sources, increasing faculty and preservice teacher awareness of the theoretical basis for service learning, and evaluating the effect of service learning on everyone involved. The brief explains that service learning can contribute to several key dispositions of professional educators, including caring, sensitivity to student differences, democratic values, and commitment to teaching. It presents snapshots of service learning experiences that illustrate how service learning can facilitate the development of such dispositions. Finally, it lists Web sites that discuss service learning in teacher education. (Contains 14 references.) (SM)

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Meeting NCATE Standards Through Service-Learning: Dispositions

AACTE

2002

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AACTE
AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

National Service-Learning in Teacher Education Partnership

Professional Issues Brief

Second in a Series
Spring/Summer 2002

Meeting NCATE Standards Through Service-Learning: Dispositions

The University of Idaho, Divison of Teacher Education, is refocusing its teacher certification program to reflect national standards and place P-12 students at the center of preservice learning. The integration of service-learning into course work throughout the program ensures that a community of learners will be developed both in academic settings and in society. These are the goals that guide the integration of service-learning into the teacher preparation program at the University of Idaho:

1. **Integrate** service-learning in all courses of the teacher education program so that preservice teachers have opportunitites to gain in-depth understanding and experiences in this pedagogy.
2. **Examine** the appropriate role of service-learning as pedagogy in the teacher education program. Since this pedagogy is nontraditional, many preservice teachers need to examine this pedagogy in light of their philosophy of teaching.
3. **Develop** support for service-learning from appropriate internal and external sources. It is critical that students see in the teacher education program model total support for this pedagogy, and it is also important to involve students in learning ways they can acquire support for using this strategy in their own teaching.
4. **Increase** faculty and preservice teacher awareness of the theoretical basis for service-learning. Everyone needs this foundation so that faculty and students understand the rationale for service-learning.
5. **Evaluate** the effect of service-learning on preservice teachers, P-12 students, P-12 teachers and administrators, university faculty, and the teacher education program.

Source: "The Enhancement of Service-Learning and Educational Foundations at the University of Idaho," by Grace Goc Karp, Melvin J. Pedras, Tuula Heide, and Kim Flottemesch, in *Service-Learning in Teacher Education*, by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 2001, Washington, DC. Author. Copyright 2001 by the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. Adapted.

An important part of NCATE Accreditation today is how to deal with the dispositions in our programs and in our assessment systems. One topic that fits into many of the beliefs, attitudes, and values of our students is the topic of service-learning. Experience derived from opportunities in service-learning offers a rich array of attention to dispositions that all teachers in training should possess. Documentation of these experiences and dispositions are often clear, behavioral, and measurable throughout the service-learning experience and are important components of our NCATE documentation.

Richard Kunkel, Dean, College of Education, Florida State University

Meeting Dispositions Through Service-Learning

Service-learning is a teaching/learning method that connects meaningful community service with academic learning, personal growth, and civic responsibility. In service-learning, students, "participate in an organized service activity that meets identified community needs and reflect on the service activity... to gain further understanding of course content, a broader appreciation of the discipline, and an enhanced sense of civic responsibility" (Bringle & Hatcher, 1995).

In teacher education, service-learning not only contributes to candidate and community development, it can play an important role in assisting teacher education programs to meet NCATE standards. The focus of this Issue Brief is on the links between service-learning and Standard I: Candidate Dispositions.

A disposition is "a tendency to exhibit frequently, consciously and voluntarily a pattern of behavior that is directed at a broad goal" (Katz, 1993). Acording to NCATE, candidates should be able to "work with students, families and communities to reflect the dispositions of professional educators as delineated in professional, state and institutional standards" (NCATE, 2002).

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Service-learning can contribute to several key dispositions of professional educators, including *caring, sensitivity to student differences, democratic values, and commitment to teaching.*

Caring and Service-Learning

Effective teaching requires a commitment not only to academic learning, but to students' well-being and development as whole persons. Noddings (1988) refers to this commitment as an "ethic of care." Studies show that candidates who participate in service-learning show gains in caring behaviors (for example, warmth and concern, compassion, and greater understanding of social problems affecting children and youth) (Potthoff et al., 1999; Root, Callahan and Sepanski, 2001). Service-learning experiences can strengthen future teachers' ethic of care in several ways. Through service to youth, candidates may become more aware of pupils' needs and the social forces influencing them. Serving others can help preservice teachers develop empathy and social responsibility. Through service experiences, candidates may also gain a more holistic understanding of students rather than focusing on academic development alone.

> S-L Snapshot: At Ball State University, candidates in the foundations course, Education in a Democratic Society, use the Developmental Assets Model (Benson, 1988) to explore the trends that shape education and children's experiences in our society. Candidates are placed in a community agency where they complete case studies of clients' developmental assets. Based on information they gather, candidates create and conduct a service project to improve these assets.

Sensitivity to Diversity and Service-Learning

The increasingly diverse population of U.S. schools requires future teachers who celebrate diversity and practice culturally responsive teaching. A number of studies have shown positive effects for service-learning on preservice teachers' attitudes toward diversity. For example, candidates who complete service with culturally different populations show greater acceptance of diversity and reduction in personal biases (Seigel, 1994; Vadeboncoeur et al., 1995; Tellez et al., 1994; McKenna & Ward, 1996; Boyle-Baise, 1998; Root, Callahan & Sepanski, 2002).

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Through service-learning, preservice teachers also become more aware of the need to adapt curriculum and methods to the needs of diverse youth (Siegel, 1994; McKenna & Ward, 1996; Boyle-Baise, 1998; Tellez et al., 1994).

S-L Snapshot: In a course in multicultural education, candidates assist in schools or community agencies which serve youth from diverse backgrounds. They interview parents about their past and present experiences with the edcuational system and analyze the interviews for instances of racism, prejudice, and discrimination. Candidates work in pairs on one project which might help bridge the gap between diverse families and schools, such as creating case studies of diverse learners and their needs for teachers, creating sample lessons which link multicultural concepts to state standards or adding multicultural resources to a school library.

Democratic Values and Service-Learning

Within a constitutional democracy, the central mission of the public schools is to prepare students for democratic citizenship. This mission requires the development of candidates who embrace and teach democratic values, including tolerance, commitment to human rights, and a commitment to work together for the common good. Studies indicate that students who participate in service-learning show gains on several democratic attitudes, including political efficacy, social responsibility, and commitment to future community service participation (Eyler & Giles, 1999). Service-learning can improve candidates' understanding of and commitment to democratic values in several ways. In service-learning, students actively care for others. Service-learning engages students in problem solving to create improved communities. Finally, many service-learning experiences confront students with the gap between democratic ideals and realities and instill in them a commitment to social change.

S-L Snapshot: Students in a Secondary Social Studies methods course learn strategies for preparing students for a democratic citizenship, including the pedagogies of democratic education and service-learning, and participate in a practicum.

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Service-Learning in Teacher Education on the Web...

NATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING IN TEACHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP
NSLTEP provides technical assistance and consulting support to teacher educators interested in developing, implementing, and evaluating service-learning components of courses, practicums, and student teaching. The web site has information about publications and people involved with service-learning.
http://www.aacte.org/

NATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING CLEARINGHOUSE
The Learn and Serve America National Service-Learning Clearinghouse (NSLC) supports the service-learning community in higher education, kindergarten through grade twelve, community-based initiatives and tribal programs, as well as all others interested in strengthening schools and communities using service-learning techniques and methodologies.
http://www.servicelearning.org/

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION NATIONAL SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECT
Contains a useful guide to institutions that serve as models of good practice for service-learning programs.
http://www.aahe.org/service/

NATIONAL YOUTH LEADERSHIP COUNCIL
The National Youth Leadership Council's mission is to build vital, just communities with young people through service-learning. As one of America's most prominent advocates of service-learning and national service, NYLC is at the forefront of efforts to reform education and guide youth-oriented public policy.
http://www.nylc.org/

CAMPUS COMPACT
Hosts an extensive collection of syllabi and online articles, a program models database containing best practices for campus engagement, and reflection resources guide for educators on how to use structured reflection to enhance service-learning experiences.
http://www.compact.org

Early in the semester, students in the class organize a community meeting at which local residents, faculty, teachers and students discuss community problems and brainstorm possible solutions. Methods students transform these ideas into service-learning units and lessons which they lead with their practicum students.

Commitment to Teaching and Service-Learning

With the critical shortage of teachers, commitment to teaching has emerged as a vital disposition of candidates. Studies show that high quality service-learning experiences positively influence commitment to teaching (Root, Callahan, & Sepanski, 2002). Service-learning experiences can intensify candidates' commitment to teaching in several ways. Service-learning allows future teachers to act on their desire to work with and help others, a primary motive for entering teaching (Serow et al., 1994). Service-learning may also help future teachers become more realistic about the challenges of teaching and form a more mature commitment to the field. Finally, service-learning projects which allow candidates to practice and gain positive feedback about their teaching skills can confirm their desire to teach.

S-L Snapshot: In an Introduction to Teaching Course, candidates review state standards for beginning teachers. They create goals for their professional development and choose among several service opportunities, such as tutoring or helping with an after-school club, one which will help them achieve their goals and meet an important community need. Candidates document their service experiences in a portfolio organized around the standards. They include reflections on the ways in which their service experience influenced their development on each standard.

The third brief in this series will address NCATE Standard 4:
Diversity

*** Please direct your questions, comments, and feedback on this Second in Series Issue Brief on Meeting NCATE Standards Through Service-Learning: Dispositions, to the staff at AACTE.* Thank you.**

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